

Anti-Social Wages and Our Immoral Economic Order

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I HAVE advanced over and over again the principle that every human being has an absolute right to a use of material goods necessary and appropriate for right human living. Such right human living is virtuous living, or living the good life, which is the happy life, by which man prepares himself for eternal happiness in the life beyond the grave. Use of material goods in sufficiency is an instrumentality for the good, happy and virtuous life. Private property is a mechanism of nature, designed by nature and nature's God that all men, and every man, may have an ordered sufficiency of material goods.

Private ownership, therefore, has a twofold aspect; it is designed for the good of the individual, who possesses it, and also for the common good of all. The greatest of Catholic theologians, St. Thomas, declares: "As regards the power of acquiring and dispensing material goods, man may lawfully possess them as his own; as regards their use man ought to look on them, not as his own, but as common." The use of privately owned goods becomes common in one way when the property owner permits others to have access to them by just contracts, especially in our day, by the wage contract. Since every able-bodied worker has an absolute right to a use of material goods in sufficiency for human and humane living, for the good, happy and virtuous life, his wage contract should represent a demand in reality on material goods sufficient for such a life.

Now what is an equitable wage calculated in terms of a bare sufficiency of material goods necessary for human, humane, happy and virtuous living? According to Professor Mitchell, of Johns Hopkins University, in his book *A Preface to Economics*:

In August, 1919, the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics made a study of the cost of maintaining the family of a govern-

ment employee (husband, wife and three children below fourteen) in Washington at a health and decency level. This involved the making up of a "quantity budget" of the actual items the family would need, and ascertainment of the prices which would have to be paid for these items at the time. The government agents, in composing the budget, meant to have it provide: enough food to maintain health, particularly the children's health; housing in low rent neighborhoods and in the smallest number of rooms consistent with decency; the upkeep of household equipment, but with no provision for purchase of furniture; warm clothing of lasting quality, with good enough appearance to preserve self-respect; street-car fares for work and shopping; a modest amount of insurance; medical and dental care; contributions to churches, unions, lodges; simple amusements, such as moving pictures once in a while, occasional street-car rides for pleasure, some Christmas gifts for the children and so on. This budget does not include many comforts which should be included in a proper American standard of living. Thus no provision is directly made for savings other than insurance, nor for vacations, nor for books and other educational purposes. This budget it was found, would cost at market prices \$2,262.47. (*A Preface to Economics*, Broadus Mitchell, Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1932, p. 299.)

This minimum use of goods in sufficiency expressed in terms of money as its current value, for happy and holy living, would seem to fit in with the minds of the two great social Popes, Leo XIII and Pius XI, except that they also demand the possibility of savings so that the worker may become a property owner. A denial of this minimum sufficiency in material goods to a family would seem to be the denial of a social wage. As Pius XI says in his Encyclical on *Christian Marriage*:

So in the first place an effort must be made to obtain that which Our predecessor, Leo XIII, of happy memory, has already required, namely, that in the State such economic and social methods should be set up as will enable every head of a family to earn as much as, according to his station in life, is necessary for himself, his wife, and for the rearing of his children, for "the laborer is worthy of his hire." To deny this or to make light of what is equitable is a grave injustice and is placed among the greatest sins by Holy Writ; nor is it lawful to fix such a scanty wage as will be insufficient for the upkeep of the family in the circumstances in which it is placed.

Pius XI in *The Reconstruction of the Social Order* says, moreover, that

Every effort must be made, therefore, that at least in the future a just share only of the fruits of production be permitted to accumulate in the hands of the wealthy and that an ample sufficiency be

supplied to the workingman. The purpose is not that these become slack at their work, for man is born to labor as the bird to fly, but that by thrift they may increase their possessions and by the prudent management of the same may be enabled to bear the family burden with greater ease and security, being freed from that hand-to-mouth uncertainty, which is the lot of the proletarian.

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1918-19 investigated the cost of living in ninety-two industrial centers, ranging from New York City to small towns in forty-two States. The average number of persons in the families investigated was 4.9. The total average earnings per family were \$1,513.29 per year. As Professor Mitchell says in this connection:

This study, when compared with others made at the same time, showed that the vast majority of these families were not receiving enough to live at a healthy and decency level. More than three-fourths of them did not receive, from all sources, enough income to equal the \$1,760 found necessary by Professor Ogburn, and ninety-one per cent were under the \$2,262 set up for the budget for a minor government employee in Washington.

Now let us turn to the year 1929, ten years later. I have before me a book entitled *America's Capacity to Consume*, prepared by the Brookings Institution, of Washington, D. C., and published in 1934. In this book we read: "A family income of \$2,500 was in 1929, and despite the decline of prices, still is, a very moderate one. It permits few of the luxuries of life, even for families of only two or three persons" (p. 119). The Bureau of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture has estimated the costs of three types of diet, to supply the physiological needs of an average family, the adequate diet at minimum cost, \$500 a year, the adequate diet at moderate cost providing more balance and variety, \$800, and the liberal diet, providing still greater variety and better quality, \$900 per year. On the basis of the 1930 census there were 27,474,000 families in the United States consisting of more than one person. Of these families nearly 6,000,000, or more than twenty-one per cent, had incomes less than \$1,000. If they spent \$500 for the minimum adequate diet, they would have \$500 left to meet all other expenses. Twelve million of these families, or forty per cent of families in the United States, received less than a yearly income of \$1,500. If they spent \$500 a year

for diet, they would have \$1,000 a year for all expenses. Twenty million of the total 27,000,000 families, namely, seventy-one per cent had less than \$2,500 a year, which would only demand a supply in goods for moderate sufficiency, whilst forty-two per cent fell below that money income capable of buying goods in that moderate sufficiency required by a social wage. And notice this, one-tenth of one per cent of the families in the higher brackets of income received as much as the forty-two per cent in the lower brackets. To make it more concrete, 11,653,000 families received in annual income \$10,000,000,000, whilst 36,000 families received approximately the same income of \$10,000,000,000. Is not this a fairly good illustration of the words of Pius XI: "For every sincere observer is conscious that the vast differences between those who hold excessive wealth and the many who are in destitution constitute a grave evil in modern society."

I have been making for some time newspaper clippings of wages paid in various industries and services. Let me cite a few of these. From the *World-Telegram*, July 2, 1935: "Minimum wages ranging from \$8.64 to \$14.40 a week for women employees of hotels and restaurants were recommended in a report submitted today to State Industrial Commissioner Elmer F. Andrews, by the Hotel and Restaurant Wage Board." It is to be noted that the minimum wage recommended represents 449.28 a year; the maximum, \$748.80 a year. This was before the declaration of the unconstitutionality of the National Recovery Act. Commenting on this report to Commissioner Andrews, the *New York Times* said editorially on May 10, 1935:

It contends that the hotel and restaurant NRA codes are being so extensively ignored that they give little protection while employers are still able under those codes to make heavy deductions for uniforms, laundry, meals, lodging, and fines. In a New York City hotel for example, "a chambermaid listed as receiving \$12.51 a week may actually receive \$4.76 for a forty-five hour work week, or about 10.2 cents an hour, including wages and tips, subject to deductions for uniforms or supplies." In one restaurant a waitress stated that she was charged two dollars for breaking a plain glass water pitcher. The Commissioner concludes that unless the State exercises its authority to establish minimum rates to safeguard the health and well-being of the workers, as well as to protect the reputable employer, it is likely that conditions will deteriorate, rather than improve.

And in connection with the wages of women here is a clipping from the *New York Times* for March 8, 1936:

Comparison of the records showed that 6,674 gainfully employed women in New York State were receiving home relief because their earnings were inadequate for the support of themselves and their families. In the manufacturing division, of 212 women with six dependents each, ninety-three per cent earned under \$15.00 weekly. Of 116 women with eight dependents each, thirteen per cent earned under \$5.00 weekly. In the clerical section of sixty-nine women with six dependents each, sixty-two per cent earned under \$15.00. Thus the majority of the employed women on relief received wages so low that they would not cover the barest necessities of life, even if the women had no dependents and were supporting only themselves.

I received the following figures of wages according to the Retail Trade Code from one of the administrators of the National Recovery Act. Stores open fifty-two hours a week but less than fifty-six hours, employees on a basis of forty hours a week, minimum wage \$14.00, or thirty-five cents an hour. Stores open for fifty-six hours a week but less than sixty-three hours, employees on a basis of a forty-four hour week, minimum wage \$14.50. Stores open sixty-three hours a week or more, employees on a basis of a forty-eight hour week, minimum wage \$15.00 or 31.2 cents per hour. And notice this, junior employees, under eighteen years, \$1.00 per week rates less than the above.

Here are some statistics: Girls and women, employed in a certain chain of stores, received about \$11.45 a week for a certain type of work, for a six-day week, with the working day lasting from 9 A. M. until 6:30 P. M. Another senior had worked for a corporation controlling a series of service stations. The work was considered skilled labor. The hours were eleven hours a day for a day man and thirteen hours for night men. This was for six days a week. The men could be told to work on their day off, which was never a Saturday or Sunday. For this they received \$18.00 a week, besides they paid for their overalls and cleaning. The uniforms change in winter and summer, and ever so often the color or style is changed completely. The men must buy these uniforms, two of each type from the company.

And so I could go on and on. And the thought occurs to me that the public and the consumers are cooperating with these companies and businesses by accepting their

service. In other words, the public is the patron of businesses that are making economic slaves of their brothers and sisters and neighbors and friends. And where is the government and the courts! The New York Supreme Court declared unconstitutional the State Minimum Wage Law under which the wages of 22,000 minor employees were raised from an average of \$10.41 to \$13.42 per week. And the declaration of the Supreme Court with regard to the NRA is well known. Now remember this, I am not complaining against these decisions according to law. We must be governed by law, not by arbitrary dictatorship. But I do not submit that our fundamental laws seemed to be based on *laissez faire*, the defense of property rights, in preference to human rights. And that is just what one of the best known American economists, Richard T. Ely, says:

The triumph of individualism, as a philosophical system, came at the critical period, when our State and federal Constitutions were in the making, giving constitutional sanction to the doctrine of *laissez faire* . . . decades of experience have amply proved that the average wage earner is too weak to protect himself; but our constitutional law has made it exceedingly difficult for the State to protect him. (*Outlines of Economics*, p. 90.)

All thoughtful men must be asking themselves the question whether it is not time at long last to humanize our laws.

Let me insist again in all this that I am not trying to stir up the poor against the rich: let me state again that I recognize the fact that some businesses today are not able to pay more in wages. Nor am I putting the case for better wages here on the ground of justice. What I maintain is that the wages today in many branches of trade are anti-social and for this reason that they work against the common good in destroying the purchasing power of the masses which alone can keep the wheels of industry turning and which alone can do away with that unemployment which is destroying the morale of the American people, especially our youth. And back of all these anti-social wages is the tremendous truth that we can produce enough for all with our present equipment, and to produce enough for all seems to be a duty in the light that all men have a right to a sufficiency of material goods appropriate for happy and holy living. If we have not produced and distributed through social wages enough for all, it is because our economic life

is organized primarily not for production but for profits, not for men but for the madness of money making. Proof of this seems to be at hand in the fact that many businesses are declaring profits equal to the other years, yet the employment situation and the necessities for public relief remain in the same condition.

The economic condition of the masses today, which can fairly be characterized by the name of economic slavery, is due to the anti-social attitude of employers. This attitude of employers, big and little, shows itself in two ways, both causes of employment: first, in extending the hours of labor and, second, in decreasing to a minimum the compensation. Increase the hours of employment for individuals and you exclude others from their right to work. Decrease compensation and you lower mass purchasing power and factories are closed, industries are curtailed, services are reduced to a minimum and unemployment extends to the millions.

I do not have to prove that man has an absolute right to a use of the material goods necessary for his connatural development, physically, intellectually, and morally, and that this right is antecedent and superior to any acquired right of property. Hence the first charge on all industrial and business operations ought to be to supply the worker with the wages which are equivalent to the goods necessary for his threefold perfection.

To say that a social wage for American workingmen and women in whatever way they work is an impossibility is to close one's eye to elemental facts. Wages are only goods in another form and God has so blessed America that we can produce enough goods that all may live in frugal comfort and security. Production in America has not broken down; it is distribution which has broken down and broken down precisely because of a denial of a living wage. Distribution has failed because of the anti-social attitude of employers who will not share by proper wages the wealth which is produced. Mr. Marriner Eccles, Governor of the Federal Reserve Board, declared before the House Banking and Currency Committee that one family in the top tenth of the one per cent bracket had an income as large as that of the 420 families in the lower part of the scale. "The problem of distribution of wealth was now the essential diffi-

culty and touched primarily the problem of distribution of wealth in process of production, not wealth already acquired. That distribution can only be brought about by a decrease in the profits for the employer and an increase in wages to the worker."

If this is done with shortened hours of work, then the mass buying power of the people is increased, the products of farms and factories will be consumed, peace and security will again reign in the economic order. Let the employers, great and small, refuse this living wage with the cut it implies in their profits and there will be no economic peace, there will be revolution. You cannot save this country or any country from Communism or Fascism by any means conceivable except one and that is economic justice practically applied by a living and a generous wage.

Mr. E. A. Filene, of Boston, recently testified before the Senate Finance Committee:

There was a time when business could get more profits if the masses got less. There was a time when employers could make more profits, if their employees got less wages; and it was during that time that most of us business men developed our theories of business. But that time has passed. The trouble is that the theories are still sticking around. All that business needs for recovery today is to recover from these theories. . . . When we became able to produce enough to go around, one of two things just had to happen. It either had to be passed around or the whole machinery of production would choke up. It wasn't passed around and the machinery did choke. That's almost the complete story of the depression.

The anti-social attitude of employers have brought about those conditions in which attacks on the freedom and sanctity of the individual are made. It is in these conditions that doctrines of Communism and Fascism flourish, the doctrine of the absolute State, of the State as God, of the State as anti-Christ of which Moscow is the sign and the symbol. Anti-Christ is in our midst in America primarily and fundamentally in the denial of a social wage. Here is anti-Christ in our social order. It is here we are witnessing the terrific conflict between Christ and anti-Christ.

Instead of this very simple remedy, a social wage for our economic ills, we see the advocacy, in this so-called age of science, of contraception of nature, of destruction of goods that men are in need of, on the false principle that pros-

perity will arise from destruction; we see the advocacy of contraception of human beings on the false principle that a lowered population will give increased mass buying power, we see the advocacy of high income taxes to provide a dole, when the tax should have been paid immediately to the worker as a reward for his labor in a living wage. Nor will an increase in the volume of money alleviate the situation unless that money goes where it belongs in adequate wages to the *worker*. The denial of an adequate wage to the worker, the economic enslavement of the worker, is at the root of all our woes, economic and moral. This is only to say, in other words, that it is by lawless unrestrained greed that "Workingmen have been given over, isolated and defenseless, to the callousness of employers."—Leo XIII.

Religion and Democracy

HON. JOSEPH C. O'MAHONEY

Commencement Address delivered by the Hon. Joseph C. O'Mahoney, United States Senator from Wyoming, to the Graduates of the Catholic University of America at Washington, D. C., June 16, 1937.

YOU are going out into the active world in one of the most critical periods of history. Yours will not be merely the task of earning a living in this or that profession or calling. Yours will be the task of reshaping the social order. The men and women of your generation have been appointed to a service to which few are called.

You go out into a world the equilibrium of which has been upset. You see old concepts of religion, politics and economics shattered. You see all nations and races in turmoil. No matter what you may think about it, no matter what you may want to do about it, the problem is in your hands, and the world will be better or worse thirty years from today according to the thinking and the acting of the young men and women of your generation.

It has seemed to me to be altogether appropriate to discuss this problem in which you are so quickly to be embroiled at the commencement exercises of the Catholic University of

America, first because this is a *Catholic* University, that is to say, an institution of learning devoted to the ideal of the universality of religion, and second, because it is an American university, that is to say, an institution devoted to the ideal of democracy.

There is a bond between Christianity and democracy which must make the members of your class the defenders of the democratic ideal. Both are securely founded on faith in the dignity and independence of the individual soul. What American, particularly what Christian American, can forget the eloquent language of the Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

"All men are created equal!" The soul of the humblest man who walks is as precious to Almighty God as that of the greatest potentate who ever held sway. That is good Christianity. It is good Americanism.

"All men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights." Life, liberty and the right to pursue happiness as each of us in the exercise of his free will sees it are gifts bestowed upon us by the Creator of the universe. That is good Christianity. It is good Americanism. But these rights are "inalienable," that is to say, they can be neither taken away nor given away. We are accountable to God for our lives and our liberty. We cannot escape eternal responsibility for those most precious of all divine gifts. We must work out our own salvation. That is good Christianity. It is good Americanism.

Precisely here, the modern world breaks away from religion and democracy. Precisely here the graduates of the Catholic University of America must meet the test of the future. Man is not individually responsible; man is not individually free; man has no inalienable rights. Such is the doctrine of those modern teachers who tell us that man is the pawn of the State. Religion and democracy have identical aims. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that both are under attack in this material world and that wherever one is weak, the other is being undermined. Wherever the State as a State is made the be-all and the

end-all of human existence, free will disappears in the religious, the conomic, and the political spheres.

For such a philosophy Americanism has no affinity, for our institutions are founded in the democratic ideal enunciated in that tenet of the Declaration of Independence which holds, not that men are made for the State but that governments are instituted among men to secure their inalienable individual rights and that they derive their just powers from the consent of the governed! Democracy, like religion, elevates the human soul. I feel, therefore, that with complete propriety I may summon the graduates of this university to do battle for democracy in the days that are ahead.

Perhaps these days will not be as dark as some may fear but they will be arduous and they will try the mettle of men's souls. The steady march of civilization has been toward a constantly increasing degree of freedom. The pursuit of education and culture would be but a waste of time were it not so, just as life itself would be a meaningless experience if the soul were not immortal. It is, however, clear that in the moment, we are passing through a phase of centralism in the economic and political fields that tends temporarily, at least, to obstruct democracy. The fate of whole peoples and continents seems to depend upon the caprice of a few men who hold themselves in power, not by the free will of those they rule, not by the "consent of the governed," but by the repeated and the ruthless exercise of arbitrary force.

Dictatorships are inherently temporary in character. They arise from ignorance, hopelessness, panic, fear; or sometimes they are expedients to meet a sudden emergency, endured in the thought they may bring security from some pressing danger. But among an intelligent people they are necessarily limited to the lives of the dictators, for they offer no rule of succession, no basis of permanent progress and contain within themselves the seeds of their own destruction. Democracy, on the other hand, is self-perpetuating, for it is rooted in the dignity of mankind. It is characterized by the mutual respect and confidence of men, by tolerance, by charity and love. It bears the noble marks that religion writes upon the soul.

We shall the more clearly understand the phenomena in

the world about us when we realize that political centralism is the product of economic centralism. We have seen the factors at work in our own country. Big Business has produced Big Government. There was no public agency great enough to cope with constantly centralizing economic power except the Federal Government, and as a consequence, during the past fifty years the steady expansion of Big Business has been accompanied by the equally steady expansion of the Washington establishment, at the expense of State governments. Because we have been losing control of our economic lives to economic centralism, we have been giving up our local governing powers to political centralism. The significance of the State has decreased apparently in direct proportion as the power of Big Business has increased, and democracy stands to lose in the process, for no central power, whether in economics or government, is as responsive to the democratic process as local power.

We have witnessed here the rapid development of what amounts to economic collectivism, but we have not recognized it for what it is, and the modern corporation executive would be the first to deny the existence of such a principle. We shall not, however, begin to solve our problem of democratic social security, or to understand the current development on the labor front until we definitely recognize the fact that the modern corporation is in fact a public and not a private agency. With its thousands of stockholders scattered all over the country, with plants and offices operating in many States and cities, with its personnel recruited from the four points of the compass, the national corporation is an economic state, the policy and control of which is far more important to all the people of the country than the political activity of most States.

We talk much these days of public debt, of staggering government expenditures and of the heavy burden of taxation. All of the taxes collected by all of the many public taxing agencies are but a drop in the bucket compared to the tribute that has been and is being wrung from the consuming masses of the nation by these corporate states which fix the prices of the necessities of life. What is the income tax for example, compared to very ordinary losses in worthless corporate securities? A new merger is created; a great new monopoly springs into being. Its promoters issue bonds and

preferred stock in ample compensation for every dollar of capital it possesses. Then, for good measure, they issue common stock which actually represents no value, except the power of the managers to fix the prices of the product and the compensation of the workers who turn it out at such figures as to compel the public unwillingly to pump value into the watered stock.

I am not concerned with the exploitations of the past. I am not concerned with the tribute the people have been compelled to pay in the past. I am not concerned with the story of old monopolies, but I am concerned with whether or not the people of America are going to understand the nature of the corporation and whether or not they will use it in a democratic manner for the general welfare. Hitherto, we have just drifted. We have permitted these huge agencies, so important to all our people, so far-reaching in their effect upon our daily lives to assume whatever form and whatever powers their promoters have chosen.

We have utterly overlooked the fact that a corporation is a creature of law possessing only that form and those powers which some government gives it. We have closed our eyes to the fact that there is nothing democratic in its control; and because we have insisted on treating it as a natural person, when in fact it is a collectivist economic state, we have been compelled to foster the growth of a government bureaucracy which, in time, unless we understand the situation and act, will itself rise above democratic controls.

How many people in the United States realize, for example, that of all the many thousands of persons who administer the Federal Government only one is chosen by all the people of the country? The President of the United States is the only official of this democracy in the choice of whom all the people have a voice. Representatives, sitting in the Congress, are chosen from particular districts. Senators are chosen from particular States. Only the President is chosen by all the people of all the States. Every other Federal official, acting for all citizens and all States, holds his office by appointment of the President for a specific term, or by appointment of the agents of the President at pleasure, or, under what is called the merit system, for life. Of all the hundreds of thousands of those who serve the Federal Gov-

ernment, by far the great majority are under permanent appointment and are responsive to the democratic impulse only by "remote control."

Now the concentration of economic control can be made effective only through the corporate device. The citizen can be deprived of personal authority over his own employment and, therefore, personal control of his own economic life only to the extent that his representatives in the States permit the creation of these artificial persons that have taken over complete direction of the economic affairs of the nation.

Recognizing the restrictive effects of corporate development upon competition and upon economic freedom, our people have been resisting, not by exercising the authority which the Federal Government unquestionably has of defining the powers and responsibilities of the interstate corporate person, but by multiplying Federal commissions with power to regulate the affairs, not only of interstate corporations, an insignificant fraction of which are the cause of our troubles, but the affairs of the natural person, whose activities it is not necessary to regulate. The natural person, in the very nature of things, cannot become a matter of serious national concern except when, through a corporate charter, he acquires power that belongs only to the public. But when, to resist the evil effects of the monopolistic corporation, we increase the discretionary regulatory power of the central government over the activities of both corporations and citizens we are moving inevitably in an anti-democratic direction and toward a collectivist state.

So we wonder why Big Business and Big Government are now being followed by Big Labor? So we wonder why centralism in economic control, having produced centralism in political control is now producing centralism in labor control? Is it not all a perfectly logical sequence? And in it all, does not the democratic motive disappear? Because the impulse does not come up from the rank and file for the adoption of a particular policy in business or government or labor, but down from those who for the time happen to occupy the places of power at the top. True it is that in our country we have, fortunately, for the most part, been able to repose confidence in the good will of those who have occupied the seats of power. But that is personal government, not democratic government.

For half a century, the people of America have been resisting direction of their economic life and of their government by Big Business. That struggle has now been won. The struggle that awaits us, the struggle which must be waged by the young men and women of your generation is that the direction of their economic affairs and of their government shall be maintained under the democratic principle. This is the service to which you, the new generation, have been appointed. We must choose between industrial and political freedom under the democratic process, or some form of the absolute state in which religion and democracy must perish together.

It is eminently a task for men and women who, like the founders of the American Republic have an indefeasible faith in the equality of man and in man's responsibility to his Creator. It is a task for youth. It is a task for those who believe that the earth and the fulness thereof belong to those who inherit it. It is a task for those who believe that the soul of man is like unto God.

Christ and the Dignity of the Human Family

REV. DONAL O'HERLIHY

Extracts from a paper read at the Catholic Truth Congress in Killarney, Ireland, June, 1937. Reprinted from the Standard (Dublin) in the issue of July 2, 1937.

"Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall be two in one flesh."

IN these words the inspired writer of *Genesis* indicated the origin of the human family. From the beginning, the family supposed the permanent union of one man with one woman for the purpose of peopling the earth. In proportion, however, as human society estranged itself from God, the ideal of monogamous marriage as the original of the family

became obscured. Among pagan peoples practices that militated against its unity and permanence were allowed to appear; agencies that tended to make the conjugal union sterile and regressive were encouraged; and men gradually came to sacrifice the higher concept of marriage, to emasculate its duties, and to elude its permanence.

No people, before the coming of Christ, had done full justice to the personal dignity of woman. She was looked upon as an object, or at most as an institution, but very rarely as a person with inalienable rights and duties. . . . Among God's chosen people, to whom the inheritance of faith and grace remained, the pressure of marriage law was heavy. They strove for and obtained a relaxation of the law of unity, the marriage bond lost some of its primeval permanence, and the dignity and sacred character of family life was but dimly appreciated.

THE NEW DISPENSATION

In the fulness of time Christ came, and restored the broken order of things. And fittingly this restoration of order was most thorough where the most extreme disorder had prevailed. Christ reiterated the divine institution of marriage; proclaimed its unity and permanence; and, in token of its paramount importance for the highest interests of the human race, fitted the contract from which it springs into His life-giving sacramental system.

Christian marriage is crowned with a threefold blessing; offspring; conjugal faith; and the sacrament. Among the blessings of marriage the child takes precedence. "Increase and multiply, and fill the earth," was the injunction given by God to our first parents, thereby indicating that the primary end of marriage is the procreation and education of children. Christian parents should, however, recall that they are destined not alone to propagate and preserve the human race, but also, and especially, to bring forth children for the Church of Christ, and raise up citizens for Heaven. And "since the natural process of generating life has become the way of death by which original sin is passed on to posterity," it follows that it is a primary and urgent duty of parents to have their children reborn in Baptism, and thus made sharers in the life to which they are ordained.

EDUCATION A RIGHT AND DUTY

Education, being the natural complement of generation and birth, is the right and duty of parents. "It is certain," writes Pius XI in his Encyclical Letter *Casti Conubii*, "that both by the law of nature and of God this right and duty of educating their offspring belongs in the first place to those who began the work of nature by giving them birth, and they are indeed forbidden to leave unfinished this work and so expose it to certain ruin." And Leo XIII, in his Encyclical Letter *Sapientiae Christianae*, insists that "It is the duty of parents to make every effort to prevent any invasion of their rights in this matter, and to make absolutely sure that the education of their children remain under their own control in keeping with their Christian duty."

Conjugal faith, which St. Augustine calls the second blessing of marriage, consists in the mutual fidelity of the spouses in fulfilling the marriage contract. This faith includes and demands the strict unity which God Himself laid down at creation. And although in the Old Dispensation, in view of Semitic prejudice, the law of unity was relaxed to some extent by God, Christ, by virtue of His supreme legislative power, revoked that concession of greater liberty and restored the law of unity in its completeness. And the principle of inward disposition is so fundamental to Christ's ethical teaching that not alone is external act of dishonor rebuked, but also the thought or desire that precedes it. "But I say to you, that whoever shall look on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart."

THE ORDER OF LOVE

A primary requisite of conjugal love is mutual disinterested love. The physical union of husband and wife should be preceded, accompanied, and followed by a union of spirit in a desire to please the Creator and honor with a pure mutuality His method of peopling the world. "Husbands, love your wives," says St. Paul, "as Christ loved the Church." Domestic society founded on this noble affection will be distinguished by what St. Augustine beautifully calls "the order of love." This order includes both the primacy of the husband in respect of the wife and children, and the willing obedience of these to him, which St. Paul commends

in the words: "Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord, because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is head of the Church."

Though husband and wife are equal in the sense that both enjoy the dignity and value of personality, yet for the purpose of leadership in domestic society the natural law has marked out man rather than woman. With him are associated the more active forms of activity and those mental and moral qualities that are appropriate to the exercise of authority. To claim for the wife completely equal authority with the husband is to treat women as man's equal in a matter in which nature has made them clearly unequal. The law of nature, which ordains the submission of the wife to rule of the husband ordains, too, that that rule be tempered with love and reverence for the dignity of the wife whom nature marks out as the manager of the household and her husband's consort and companion.

SACRAMENTAL GRACE

But it is by virtue of the third blessing of Christian marriage that the dignity of that state is assured and the sacred character of family life proclaimed. Christ made the marriage contract an efficacious sign of grace, and made Christian marriage a type of His own espousals with His people. He attached to the marriage state a sacramental grace, and thus sanctified conjugal affection, sweetened the yoke of mutual fidelity, and lightened the burden which the bearing and rearing of children demand. The advocates of neopaganism would debase Christian marriage to suit the whim and freak of sensual man. Christ regards it as the sole source of a healthy social order, and the only haven that can preserve society from disintegration and decay.

The ideal of Christian marriage and the family has to do with the regulation of the strongest passion in nature, and its effective subordination to the sacred purpose it was intended from the beginning to subserve. In proportion as this purpose is ignored or frustrated, men will shirk the sacrifice it involves, children will be neglected, and society will hasten to ruin.

ENNOBLING INFLUENCE

As the State is for the family, so the family is for the individual, and the individual is for God. And what a re-

fining and ennobling influence the divine institution of the family has on the individual and society? The natural inclination that draws the sexes together to found a family is sanctified by the higher love that is based on reverence for the personal dignity of the individual Christian spouses. The grace of the sacrament helps the wedded couple to bear the sacrifice and restraint that are essential to their calling. In their reciprocal duties of kindness and consideration Christian spouses will find in the marriage state a constant school for the repression of self and all that self implies. And the great mystery of a new creation: the embodying of a soul from the hand of God in the flesh of our mortality; the entrusting of this sacred charge, and the commission of its eternal destiny into the hands of its human parents must surely exercise on them an influence for good beyond esteem.

The Holy Family of Nazareth will now be the inspiration of their home: the saving name of Jesus will be the first to be uttered by infant lips; and it will be the parents' supreme and constant concern to fashion the minds and hearts of their children in the mould of Christian life, to teach them ideals of love and piety, and to foster in them an attachment to the truths and practices of religion. This is the family when it clings to the ideal set by Christ. Poverty it may meet: suffering it will have: but its prototype of Nazareth will be a consolation: its Divine Restorer will be a source of strength.

THE FAMILY AND THE STATE

The family and not the individual is the natural unit in the State. By origin and by nature domestic society is prior to civil society. Its members have rights and duties, which the State is bound to safeguard, but has in nowise the right to trespass on or frustrate. Hence the State is acting outside its competence when it interferes with the unity and stability of the home: it is tragically unmindful of its own purpose and duty when it overrides any of the obligations essential to domestic society, and it fills the rôle of an usurper when it seizes the functions assigned by the law of nature to parents. In particular the State can never lawfully arrogate to itself a power which would place eugenics before aims of a higher order. Divorce under its ægis is sacrilegious and unjust. And in the sphere of education, its

duty is to protect and not to dominate, to supplement and not supplant.

Rather should civil authority and its magistrates seek their true vocation in subjecting their laws to the law of God, and find their greatness in a vassalage to Him who is their Master. They should recall that the public weal is best promoted by protecting domestic interest; that virtuous citizenship is based on virtue in the home.

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY

Hearken to the teaching of St. Paul: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord. Honor thy father and thy mother. And you, fathers, provoke not your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and correction of Christ." Parents must not be blind to their responsibility in this matter. If they recoil from sacrifice in their own lives, if they indulge every whim and fancy in their children, they are false to their sacred trust, and are preparing a generation that will embitter old age.

Christian mothers, yours is a noble calling: Nazareth is your inspiration, Mary your protector. It is your duty and privilege to teach your children the love of God, to lead them in the path of virtue. You should show forth a perfect awareness of this, your duty. You should strive to have Christ's ideal realized in its completeness. It is only by attainment of this ideal that we can keep ourselves a Christian people, and cooperate in the redeeming work of Christ.